

# RYDER'S FUND

## ONE BY ONE



Winter 2019 Newsletter | [RydersFund.org](http://RydersFund.org) | Ryder's Fund is Administered by the YMCA of Northern Colorado Endowment Committee

## ORIGIN OF RYDER'S FUND

On January 17, 2016, our 20 year old son, Ryder, went missing. It was a parent's worst nightmare. In the following days, weeks and months, hundreds of people searched thousands of acres in the vast and rugged Walker Ranch area west of Boulder. Mercifully, after 1 ½ years, on July 29, 2017, Ryder's remains were found and we were able to bring him home, say goodbye and have some sense of closure. In this tragic shared experience, we witnessed the goodness in people and greatness in our community. Ryder was a warm, caring and empathetic person so it seemed that Ryder's Fund was a fitting way to honor those qualities and begin to give back for a greater purpose. It is from this place that Ryder's Fund was created to enhance the healthy development of young people in our community and assist them in meeting life's challenges. —Rick and Cindy Johnson



There are several elements of our vision for Ryder's Fund, including schools/education, law enforcement, specialized service providers, faith community and youth programs.

## COLORADO VS. NEBRASKA FOOTBALL GAME "Mental Health Awareness" Game

Ryder's Fund continues its partnership with the Bolder Buffaloes Peer Advocacy Group (a/k/a Bolder Buffs) through the University of Colorado Athletic Department. The Bolder Buffs program mission is to promote mental health and wellness through education, programming and support for their fellow student-athletes and the larger community. The partnership has resulted in the production of a whole series of videos. Several of these "Mental Health Minutes" can be viewed at [rydersfund.org](http://rydersfund.org) or CU's Psychological Health and Performance website at [cubuffs.com/index.aspx?path=php](http://cubuffs.com/index.aspx?path=php). Ryder's Fund also was a sponsor for the Colorado vs. Nebraska football game on September 7, 2019. Ryder's Fund helped to provide 5,000 t-shirts for the student section highlighting the message:



### **Mental Health – Let's Talk About It #BeThe1To**

The day was capped off when James Stefanou's 34-yard field goal in overtime gave Colorado its first lead, Nebraska's field goal attempt sailed wide right and the Buffs prevailed 34-31 in one of the greatest comebacks in Colorado football history!

A special thank you to Mail Solutions & Printing in Erie, who once again donated the printing of the Ryder's Fund Newsletter. Please repay this kindness by considering this business for your next mailing or printing project. You can find Mail Solutions at 649 State Highway 52, Erie, CO 80516. 303-828-5222 [wendy@mailolutionsinc.com](mailto:wendy@mailolutionsinc.com) • [mailolutionsinc.com](http://mailolutionsinc.com)



## ASSISTING FRONT RANGE RESCUE DOGS

Front Range Rescue Dogs (FRRD) is an all-volunteer nonprofit that has been providing immediate response dog teams to the Boulder County Sheriff's Office for over 30 years. FRRD receives over 100 calls each year and works very closely with the Sheriff, fire districts, Rocky Mountain Rescue Group and Boulder Emergency Squad to provide search and rescue services in Boulder County and beyond. Unfortunately, many of FRRD's efforts involve body recoveries. As such, FRRD search teams face unique mental and emotional struggles. Ryder's Fund is sponsoring a partnership between FRRD and Responder Alliance to develop and provide a year-long mental health program for all FRRD teams. The hope is to educate responders to the possible reactions they have to the stresses they encounter in search and rescue incidents, provide tools to bring responders back to a healthy place, if needed, and instill processes to work better as a team and assist each other. The current plan is to run this program for one year with Responder Alliance facilitating training and discussions. We have seen first-hand the incredible work FRRD does and are pleased Ryder's Fund can give back to this great organization.



## UPDATE ON SOPHIE'S JOURNEY

As reported in the Summer 2019 newsletter, Ryder's Fund assisted with specialized treatment for Sophie, an infant born last year with hydrocephalus who has faced several surgeries and ongoing intensive and specialized treatments. Ryder's Fund is happy to report that Sophie is doing really well. She just celebrated 1 year since her last surgery and she is one of the most joyful babies her parents have ever seen. She is making really good progress developmentally, as well. She has recently begun to army crawl, which is a huge step for her! She is still receiving the neurotherapy treatments. In addition, Sophie will receive intensive occupational therapy sessions over the next month intended to force her brain to use her weak side. We are happy to report on Sophie's progress and provide this picture from the pumpkin patch.



## SUPPORT FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT THROUGH OPERATION EQUINE

Operation Equine empowers military, veteran and emergency responder families to reconnect and heal through the power of equine-assisted psychotherapy and learning. First responders and their families face unique challenges that accompany a life of service. Operation Equine helps explore healthier ways to face and cope with those challenges, improve communications with family members by working through past/present traumas with a goal of shifting from "surviving" to working toward a positive and happier life. Ryder's Fund was proud to help with the costs of this program to lend assistance to a Boulder County Sheriff's employee.



## BOCO RETREAT

### Helping Middle School and High School Students Through the Faith Community

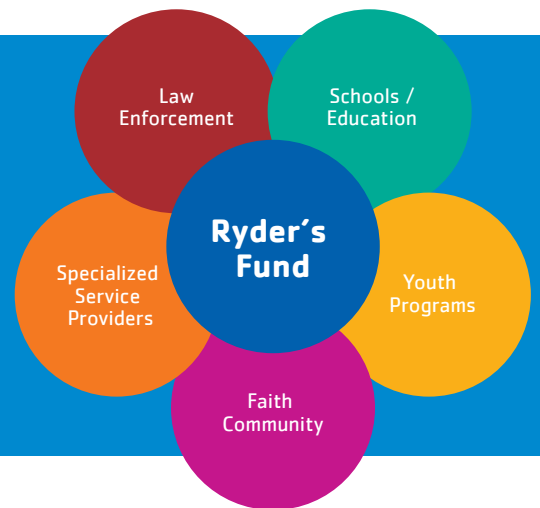
Ryder's Fund provided scholarships for three middle school students to attend BOCO retreat weekend held October 12-13, 2019 at Timberline Camp in Estes Park. The retreat provides a mountain camp experience along with mentoring from young adult role models to teens in our community. Ryder's Fund also provided four scholarships to send high schoolers to the BOCO retreat held at the Warwick Denver. The group includes more than 100 kids from three churches (Boulder Valley Christian Church, First Presbyterian and Cornerstone) across Boulder Valley. The scholarships provided by Ryder's Fund helped kids coming from low-income families or dealing with financial or family issues.

**IN MEMORIAM:** Ryder's friend and classmate, Alex Richard Stangl (November 25, 1994–October 19, 2019), passed away too soon marking another loss of a young person in our community. The family asked that in lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Natural Highs – Healthy Alternatives to Drugs & Alcohol. The website where you can donate is: [www.naturalhighs.org](http://www.naturalhighs.org)

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

Ryder's Fund seeks to continue to enhance the healthy development of young people in our community and assist them in meeting and overcoming the challenges of our modern world. Ryder's Fund also proudly supports the educators, faith leaders and first responders that help our young people and our larger community. Rest assured, one by one, we are making an impact on our local community and its most precious resource, young people. Make a charitable contribution at [RydersFund.org](http://RydersFund.org) or send a check (Payable to YMCA of Northern Colorado-Ryder's Fund) to:

YMCA of Northern Colorado  
Ryder's Fund  
2800 Dagny Way, Lafayette, CO 80026



## FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Total Contributions .....\$341,452.73\*  
Total Gifts/Grants.....\$69,038.21  
0% spent on Administrative Costs.

*\*includes \$20,635 contributed prior to establishment of YMCA endowment account*

Ryder's Fund is administered by the YMCA of Northern Colorado Endowment Committee

